

Yes Dear I'll get it later I promise

The pitfall of procrastination

Question: Does anyone here ever struggle with putting off doing what you should be doing? In other words, does anyone here ever procrastinate?

I. What procrastination is

The dictionary defines the word procrastinate, "To put off doing something, especially out of habitual carelessness or laziness."

Rick Warren writes, "Procrastination is a universal problem. Most of us know what we need to do, we just put it off."

Gloria Pitzer says, "Procrastination is my sin, it brings me nothing but sorrow, I know that I should stop it, in fact, I will tomorrow."

II. A biblical example of procrastination

Pharaoh had the children of Israel under his hand of tyranny for a long time so God sent Moses to lay down an ultimatum to Pharaoh - "Let my people go or else." But Pharaoh was stubborn and hard hearted and he refused to let them go, so God proceeded to bring a series of plagues on him and Egypt.

Now notice V 9, 10a in Exodus Chpt. 8 "You set the time!" Moses replied. "Tell me when you want me to pray for you, your officials, and your people. I will pray that you and your houses will be rid of the frogs. Then only the frogs in the Nile River will remain alive."

And wow, look at his reply to Moses V 10a "Do it tomorrow,"

How often has that one word, (tomorrow), gotten us into trouble....

- Tomorrow, I'll start working on my drinking problem.
- Tomorrow I'll tackle my debt. Tomorrow I'll quit smoking. Tomorrow I'll start my diet

- Tomorrow I'll get to that school assignment. Tomorrow I'll go look for that job. Tomorrow I'll make that phone call.

III. Why do we procrastinate? Maybe it is because of

A. INDECISIVENESS We can't make up our minds about what to do.

B. PERFECTIONISM Mike Breaux says, "Some of the greatest procrastinators are closet perfectionists.

They figure if I can't do it with perfection then I just won't even bother."
Ecclesiastes 11:4

C. FEAR: Fear forces us to try to predict all the obstacles ahead of us which in turn overwhelms us and makes us gun shy to try anything. We image all the problems we are going to have and so we freeze from doing anything.

Proverbs 26:13

A German proverb puts it this way: Fear makes the wolf bigger than he is

Some times it may also be a lack of knowledge or training to do the task or A lack of self-confidence or even A simple dislike for a task

D. LAZINESS

Edgar Bergen said "Laziness is nothing more than the habit of resting before you get tired."

W.C. Fields added some humor when he said: The laziest man I ever met put popcorn in his pancakes so they would turn over by themselves.

IV. What it brings us

A. Simple things such as

- A sink full of dirty dishes from yesterday

- Garbage cans running over
- Laundry baskets full and drawers in the dresser empty.
- Behind in bills and the late charges are piling up
- The oil in the car not changed when it should have been
- The lawn not mowed for the weekend
- Homework not done and it is due today
- A room not cleaned

B. Bigger things such as

- Discouragement and depression

Because the things we put off doing still hang over our heads, we cannot really enjoy the time we have while we procrastinate.

It is always at the back of our minds that we still have to do it and that is discouraging

- Stress

We run on frayed nerves because we put off so many things till the last minute, only to find that in the last minute we suddenly have an all day job to get done immediately if not sooner. That is enough to stress anyone.

V. How to avoid this pitfall

A. First we need to DEVELOP A SENSE OF URGENCY about our predicament

We must develop a sense of urgency about the important stuff in life before it is too late. If we don't do something today about our problems they will eventually get worse. Ecclesiastes 10:18

B. We also need to STOP MAKING EXCUSES

Jesus met a lame man near the pool of Bethesda in John 5. The man had been there for 38 years, content to just lounge near the pool and do nothing about his predicament.

The first thing he had for Jesus was an excuse. V 7 says "for I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred up. While I am trying to get there, someone else always gets in ahead of me."

Observation: It seems to me that after 38 years He should have been able to at least crawl to the edge and drop in somewhere along the line.

Proverbs 22:13 AND 26:13

Benjamin Franklin said, "People who are good at making excuses are rarely good at anything else."

Don't forget, "Tomorrow is often the busiest day of the week" OR "The lazier a man is, the more he plans to do tomorrow."

C. We also need to TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TODAY and stop thinking that tomorrow will be better

James 4:14

Thought: We may not actually die tomorrow, but we may not be physically able tomorrow to do what needs to be done now Eph. 5:16

Thought: TODAY is a most unusual day, because we have never lived it before; we will never live it again; it is the only day we have.

In closing dear friend; Procrastination can be deadly. Eternally deadly.

Billy Graham was at a hotel in Seattle back in the 1960's. Asleep, he was awakened with a powerful burden to pray for Marilyn Monroe.

(The next morning his burden was stronger and he had his assistant call Monroe to set up an appointment.)

Her agent made it difficult. She was too busy, she would meet with Graham-sometime. "Not now, maybe two weeks from now."

Two weeks though, were too little, too late. She committed suicide.

Thought: as some perceptive person observed "Procrastination is suicide on the installment plan."

Final thoughts: Maybe you have been procrastinating when it comes to dealing with that little voice inside that says, Are you sure you are ready to die?

Well if you have been putting off dealing with that I ask, why procrastinate any longer? Just think about and do the following

Realize you are a sinner Rom. 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God. Rom. 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Rom. 6:23b and Jn. 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)